

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Report of Fire Department Activities 1995

Duxbury Clipper, Wednesday, April 10, 1996

This report is a compilation of all activities of this department for calendar year 1995. The report examines emergency responses, training, emergency management, fire prevention, and public safety education.

The department responded to 1,381 emergencies during the year: 810 of these calls (60%) were medical emergencies, 116 (9%) were actual fires, and the remaining 455 calls (33%) were other type of emergency calls. These calls are further broken down as follows:

- 739 patients were treated or transported
- 555 of the medical calls were assisted by the firefighting crew
- 375 medical were in single family homes
- 85 were on highways and 95 were on local streets
- 16 of these calls were to the beach or ocean and resulted in 5 activations of the water rescue team
- 43 fires were in structures
- 31 of these were in single family homes and 2

resulted in \$200,000 in damage

total damage to structures was \$233,860

- 22 fires were in motor vehicles resulting in \$85,000 in damage
- 50 fires were brush fires resulting in 16 acres of property damage

The low fire damage and low number of serious fires can be attributed to quick fire attack by well trained crews, and in many cases early detection of the fires.

There were 150 automatic fire alarm activations received from buildings in town.

- 56 were received from single family homes
- 19 from public assembly
- 8 from health care
- 35 from other residential
- 32 from commercial properties

Many of these responses were caused by small fires that if not detected and reported would have resulted in serious, destructive fires. It cannot be stressed enough that early detection and notification is critical to an effective emergency response system.

A significant increase in calls is attributed to carbon monoxide alarm activations. We responded to 23 alarms this past year. While investigating these calls we were able to detect and correct numerous life threatening problems. I highly recommend that each homeowner install at least one smoke detector and one carbon monoxide detector on each level of their home.

The largest percentage of calls (65%) were received between 8 am and 6 pm, the remaining 35% were received between 6 pm and 8 am. Of these nighttime calls 14% occurred after midnight. Calls received by day of week remains fairly consistent with a high of 16% on Thursday and a low of 11% of Monday.

The response time to emergencies is divided by fire calls and medical calls. The average response time to fire calls was 5 minutes and 45 seconds and the average response time to medical calls was 4 minutes and 56 seconds. The calls are further divided:

•43% of all medical calls were responded to within 4 minutes

- 39% were between 5 and 8 minutes
- 10% were between 9 and 12 minutes
- 2% were over 12 minutes
- 38% of all fire calls were responded to within 4 minutes
- 43% were between 5 and 8 minutes
- 12% were between 9 and 12 minutes
- 2% were over 12 minutes

There was a significant increase in mutual aid calls received and given. We responded to other towns 91 times. 23 of these were fire calls and 68 were medical calls. We received mutual aid 93 times. 18 for fire calls, mostly automatic mutual aid, 71 medical calls, 2 water rescues, 1 extrication, and 1 medical helicopter stand-by.

The fire prevention bureau conducted 1,020 safety inspections. These inspections generally involve the issuance of a permit and an on-site field inspection. The inspections were as follows:

- 673 smoke detector compliance
- 55 underground full tank removals
- 135 oil burner installations and alterations
- 4 special projects
- 6 general inspections (schools, nursing homes)
- 104 occupancy permits
- 33 miscellaneous inspections

The Fire Prevention Officer works very closely with the Building Inspector conducting many of these inspections.

Training of the department is a top priority and was conducted throughout the year. A total of 3,742 hours of training was received. This training was both on-duty and off-duty. If all this training required payment the cost would have exceeded \$90,000 dollars. The full time firefighters received an average of 172 hours of in-service training. The results of a good training program can be seen in the low dollar loss to property from fire, and in the treatment we deliver to victims of injury and illness.

In 1996 we will form a Public Safety Education Team. A source of funding for this team will come from a state awarded grant and public donations.